# Bicycle Travel on State Routes in District 6 - Introduction

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in District 6 offers miles of bicycle travel on long stretches of level terrain in the Central Valley and along rolling or mountainous terrain in the national and state parks. The abundant sunny weather in this part of California is ideal for biking most of the year.

District 6 encompasses a span of roadway miles in five counties—Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and Kern counties. The district consists of approximately 476 miles of freeway and 1,554 miles of rural and urban highway. With 2,030 miles of roadway, District 6 has the largest portion of road miles to maintain in the state highway system. Most freeway miles are not open to bicycles. In fact, all of State Route 99 in District 6 prohibits bicycle access. Other freeway corridors in a number of larger urban areas also prohibit bicycle access. But, elsewhere, bicycle access is enjoyed from the flatlands to the foothills and beyond.

Some of the District 6 state highways lead to recreational lake areas within scenic mountain regions. These state highways lead to popular destinations such as Yosemite National Park, which contains Class I bicycle trails. Kings Canyon National Park and Sequoia National Park experience some bicycling on roads with lower posted speed limits. Colonel Allensworth State Park, along State Route 43, is a bicycle-friendly historical park where park staff, if asked, can explain bicycle use in Allensworth during the early 1900s.

Biking opportunities can take you past prime farmland. Agriculture is a leading economic activity and use of land in the Central Valley. Small agricultural communities and towns are scattered all along the state routes. There are more than 250 different crops grown in the Central Valley, including grapes, cantaloupes, tomatoes, cotton, lettuce, citrus fruits and a variety of nuts. Within a 40-mile radius, Selma, located in Fresno County, produces more than 95 percent of the nation's raisin supply. A bicycle ride through any of these communities would be refreshing, with relaxing views and the scent of harvest in the air.

Though sun is abundant here in most months, the weather varies throughout the year during the different seasons. The fall and spring seasons are mild, with an average of 70/50 degrees. Summers can be hot, averaging 98/65 degrees. And the winter months average 55/38 degrees. Fog is prevalent during winter, mostly in the lower elevations. Bicycling in the fog can significantly limit sight distance on the road and result in a rider needing to be even more cautious. As long as you keep these potential weather risks (extreme temperatures, fog, etc.) in mind, you can enjoy your ride no matter what the weather or conditions.

If you are prepared for the road, in bicycling shape and ready for an enjoyable experience pedaling through District 6's roadways, a ready map can direct you where to go. The bicycle maps in this guide can help you plan your trip. The maps are separated into routes, by county. Each map shows an elevation profile chart of the state routes in that area. Routes are described in segments, with important information called out: shoulder width, terrain, speed limits, postmile, number of highway lanes, land use, call box location, and nearby restaurants, gas

stations, convenient stores and lodging. Suggested alternate routes are given for the freeway segments that prohibit bicycle access.

> The State of California and the California Department of Transportation, and their officers, agents, and employees, make no representations as to the safety or fitness of the routes where bicycle travel is allowed, or as to any route depicted in this guide. Bicycling involves inherent risks. Bicyclists are responsible for exercising reasonable judgment and watching out for their own safety, including but not limited to selecting travel routes, evaluating climatic and weather conditions, bicycle maintenance and repair, physical fitness and health condition, visibility, safety equipment, clothing, navigation, and operation of the bicycle.
>
> Roadway conditions may differ from the descriptions in this guide, so please research the current conditions of your intended route before your trip.
>
> Local public entities selected the alternate routes within their respective jurisdictions. The inclusion of the alternate routes in this guide does not constitute any endorsement by Caltrans of such alternate routes.
>
> It is not intended that any standard of conduct or duty toward the public be created or imposed by the publication of this guide or by any representation in this guide. This guide is not designed to establish a legal standard of care.

Other helpful bicycle resources are available on the Internet. For regional bicycle plans for Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and Kern counties, see the website on page 79. For more detailed traffic and geometric information, see the Transportation Concept Reports (TCR) for the state routes. The District 6 TCR webpage is located in the *References* section on page 80.

We hope this bicycle guide enriches your traveling experience throughout District 6. Most important, be safe while riding and obey the traffic laws. Truck traffic can be heavy on a number of the state highways, and shoulders can be narrow on the rural routes, so be cautious and vigilant when riding.

## State Laws and Safety Tips for Bicycling

What has two wheels, improves mobility and air quality, reduces traffic congestion and parking demand, saves energy, and promotes healthy living through enjoyable exercise? A bicycle. Planners, engineers, policymakers, and cyclists recognize these as benefits of bicycle commuting. Please make the following safety checks for bicycling safely:

The California Vehicle Code *(CVC)* contains the state laws that specify where and how bikes must operate. The following is not meant to be an all-inclusive list or exact

quote of the CVC, but a simplified language listing of sections related to the operation of bicycles. Please refer to the statutory language webpage located in the *References* section on page 78.

**Definition of Bicycle** CVC 231 A bicycle is a *device* upon which any person may ride, propelled exclusively by human power through a belt, chain, or gears, and having one or more wheels. Persons riding bicycles are subject to the provisions of this code specified in Sections 21200 and 21200.5.

**Rights and Responsibilities** CVC 21200 Bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as motor vehicle drivers.

## Where You Can Ride

**Roadway** CVC 21202 When bicyclists are traveling *slower* than the normal speed of traffic, they must ride as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the road *except:*

- When overtaking and passing another bicycle or vehicle going in the same direction;
- When preparing for a left turn at an intersection or into a private road or driveway;
- When necessary to avoid hazards such as objects, vehicles, surface hazards, or substandard width lanes that make it unsafe to continue along the right-hand curb or edge;
- When approaching a place where a right turn is authorized;
- When the road carries traffic in one direction and has two or more marked traffic lanes, the bicyclists may ride as near to the left-hand curb or edge of the roadway as practicable;
- Bicyclists traveling at the speed of traffic may ride within the travel lane.

**Bicycle Lanes** CVC 21208 On a road with a bike lane, a bicyclist traveling less than the normal speed of traffic must use the bike lane *except:*

- When overtaking and passing another bicycle, vehicle, or pedestrian in the bike lane or about to enter the lane;
- When preparing for a left turn;
- When reasonably necessary to avoid debris or other hazardous conditions;
- When approaching a place where a right turn is authorized;
- Bicyclists shall not leave a bicycle lane until it can be done safely and after using the appropriate signal.

**Direction of Travel** CVC 21650 Bicyclists must ride on the right side of the road in the direction of traffic *except:*

- When overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction;
- When making a left turn;
- When the right side of the roadway is closed to traffic, under construction, or repair;
- When the roadway is for one-way traffic;

- When the roadway is too narrow;
- This does not prevent a bicyclist from riding on any shoulder of a highway where it is not prohibited.

**Motorized Bicycles** CVC 21207.5 Motorized bicycles may not be used on bicycle paths, trails, or lanes unless allowed by the local authority.

**Bike Path Obstruction** CVC21211 No one may stop or park a bicycle, vehicle, or other object on a bikeway or bicycle path or trail with the exception of utility or public utility vehicles, etc.

**Sidewalks** CVC 21206 Local cities and counties regulate whether bicyclists may ride on sidewalks.

**Freeways** CVC 21960 Bicycles, including motorized bicycles, may not be ridden on freeways and expressways where prohibited by the California Department of Transportation.

**Toll Bridges** CVC 23330 Bicycles may not cross a toll bridge unless permitted to do so by the California Department of Transportation.

## Equipping Your Bicycle

**Brakes** CVC 21201(a) Bicycles operating on the roadway must be equipped with a brake that allows the operator to perform a one-braked wheel skid on dry, level, and clean pavement.

**Handlebars** CVC 21201(b) Bicycle handlebars must not be higher that the rider's shoulders.

**Bicycle Size** CVC 21201(c) A bicycle ridden on the roadway must be small enough for the rider to stop, support it with one foot on the ground, and start safely.

**Lights** CVC 21201(d) and (e) At night, a bicycle must be equipped with a white light that is visible from 300 feet from the front and sides of the bicycle. A light may be attached to the operator and visible from 300 feet may be used instead of the bicycle light.

**Reflectors** CVC 21201(d) At night, bicycles must be equipped with all of the following reflectors:

- A red reflector on the rear visible from 500 feet to the rear;
- A white or yellow reflector on each pedal, shoe, or ankle visible from the front and rear of the bicycle from a distance of 200 feet;
- A white or yellow reflector on each side forward of the center of the bicycle and a white or red reflector on each side to the rear of the center of the bicycle. These reflectors are not required if the bicycle has reflectorized front and back tires.

**Seats** CVC 21204 Bicyclists riding on roadways must have a permanent and regular seat. Bicycle passengers four years of age or younger and weighing 40 pounds or less must have a seat which retains them in place and protects them from the moving parts of the bicycle.

## Operating Your Bicycle

**Helmets** CVC 21212 Bicyclists and bicycle passengers under age 18 must wear an approved helmet when riding on a bicycle.

**Head phones** CVC 27400 Bicyclists may not wear earplugs in both ears or a headset covering both ears. Hearing aids are allowed.

**Alcohol and drugs** CVC 21200.5 Bicyclists may not ride while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

**Hitching rides** CVC 21203 Bicyclists may not hitch rides on vehicles.

**Carrying articles** CVC 21205 Bicyclists may not carry items which keep them from keeping at least one hand on the handlebars.

**Pedestrians** CVC 21950, 21963 Bicyclists must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians within marked crosswalks or within unmarked crosswalks at intersections. Bicyclists must also yield the right-of-way to totally or partially blind pedestrians carrying a predominantly white cane or using a guide dog.

**Parking** CVC 21210 Bicyclists may not leave bicycles on their side on the sidewalk or park bicycles in a manner which obstructs pedestrians.

## Highway Design Manual, Chapter 1000 (Caltrans)

**"Bikeway Planning and Design"** provides design standards and guidelines for on- and off-street bikeways. State and local transportation agencies are required to comply with Chapter 1000 mandatory standards as a minimum when implementing new bikeways. Chapter 1000 differs from the rest of the Highway Design Manual *(HDM)* in that it also applies to facilities off the state highway system (California Streets and Highways Code, Sections 890.8 and 891). Please refer to the HDM webpage located in the *References* section on page 80.

## May is Bike to Work Month

May is Bike Month in California. It's also National Bike Month. These proclamations provide the perfect opportunity to give a*ctive transportation*—bicycling—a try. Most trips we Americans make are short: 50 percent are less than three miles, 40 percent are less than two miles, and 28 percent are less than one mile. These distances are ideal for beginning commuters.

Bike to Work Champions May 2015

In mid-May, Bike to Work Day occurs throughout California with a wide range of special events and competitions. In Fresno, Caltrans District 6 participates in the Bike to Work Corporate Challenge, which is sponsored by iBikeFresno.org. Event participants include local agencies and businesses in the Fresno area. Caltrans District 6 has had a large number of riders compete in this annual event and has placed first in the large corporation category a number of times. Other fun rides are organized throughout the month of May.

## Complete Streets

Deputy Directive DD-64-R2 states "The California Department of Transportation provides for the needs of travelers of *all ages* and *abilities* in all planning, programming, design, construction, operations, and maintenance activities and products on the State highway system. The Department views all transportation improvements as opportunities to improve safety, access, and *mobility for all travelers* in California and recognizes bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation system."

The *Main Street, California* document is an informational guide that reflects many of the recent updates to Caltrans manuals and policies that improve multimodal access, livability and sustainability within the transportation system. *Main Street, California* helps the reader locate information about standards and procedures described in the Caltrans Highway Design Manual (HDM), the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (California MUTCD), and the Project Development Procedures Manual (PDPM). Caltrans is committed to continual refinement of standards and policies that promote greater flexibility in developing state highway main streets that invigorate the vitality of local communities and the transportation system. (*Main Street, California*, 3rd edition)

The California Transportation Plan enables a unified strategy for meeting interregional multimodal travel needs, reaching maximum feasible greenhouse gas emissions reductions and supporting national, local and statewide policies and mandates relevant to the transportation system. Goals, policies, findings and proposals are documented in District System Management Plans (DSMPs), Transportation Concept Reports (TCRs), or Corridor System Management Plans (CSMPs).

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 *(Senate Bill 375)* outlines California's goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions through integrated land use and transportation planning. The Metropolitan Planning Organizations are required to prepare a "Sustainable Communities Strategy" to help meet greenhouse gases (GHG) reduction targets for cars and light trucks for the years 2020 and 2035.

Caltrans Smart Mobility is providing a new approach to integration of transportation and land use. Six smart mobility principles include location efficiency, reliable mobility, health and safety, environmental stewardship, social equity and robust economy. The Smart Mobility Framework was prepared in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, and the California Department of Housing and Community Development to address both long-range challenges and short-term pragmatic actions to implement multimodal and sustainable transportation strategies in California.

Senate Bill (SB) 743 is changing the way transportation impacts are analyzed under CEQA by restricting the use of Level of Service (LOS) and requiring different metrics to measure impacts particularly in areas that are served by transit. The alternative criteria must "promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses." One suggested criterion is person throughput as a

measurement, which could be compared to vehicle throughput. Person throughput is a potential alternative to using LOS because it can include all modes in the analysis—bicycles, pedestrians, transit, carpool, vanpool, single-occupancy vehicles (SOV). The challenge is developing methodology for assessing person throughput along a corridor and methods of calculating the capacity of modes.

In an effort to support the construction of more multimodal local streets and roads, and include design flexibility in multimodal design, Caltrans endorses National Association of City Transportation Officials' *(NACTO)* guidelines that include innovations such as buffered bicycle lanes and improved pedestrian walkways. "California's transportation system must be multimodal and support bicycles and pedestrians as well as automobiles," said Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty. "Caltrans' endorsement of these innovative street design options is an important part of modernizing our approach to improving transportation for all Californians." This decision has made California the third state in the nation to endorse these new design guidelines. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) also supports this flexible approach to bicycle and pedestrian transportation design.

Context Sensitive Solutions is an approach to plan, design, construct, maintain, and operate the transportation system. These solutions use innovative and inclusive approaches that integrate and balance community, aesthetic, historic, and environmental values with transportation safety, maintenance, and performance goals. Context sensitive solutions are reached through a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach involving all stakeholders.

The Caltrans Transportation Planning Grant Program provides five categories of grants: Partnership Planning, Statewide Planning, Transit Planning, Community-based Transportation Planning, and Environmental Justice. Today, the Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program offers the Sustainable Communities and the Strategic Partnership. These grants may be used for a wide range of transportation planning purposes that address local and regional transportation needs and issues. Caltrans District 6 has managed numerous Transportation Planning projects since 2001. The Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants and other relevant webpages are located in the *References* section on pages 79–80.

## Pedestrians on State Routes in District 6

On Caltrans state routes, pedestrians are allowed unless prohibited. DD-64-R2 states "Bicyclists, *pedestrians*, and non-motorized traffic are permitted on all State facilities, unless prohibited (CVC, section 21960)." Sidewalks are available in a number of cities and communities. Pedestrian maps showing sidewalk access in cities and rural areas are available on pages 70–74. The maps also identify the sections of state routes that *allow or prohibit* pedestrian access. In District 6, 40 cities and some unincorporated communities have state routes traveling through their city limits or area. For many of the cities, a state route operates as a main street. With many disadvantaged communities, the Central Valley is an area that can benefit from better pedestrian accessibility. Residents who do not have access to a vehicle, rely heavily on the

pedestrian access of our state routes. Pedestrians are given access to goods and services, especially within small rural cities/communities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act *(ADA)* and the California Government Code (CGC) prescribe that facilities shall be made accessible to persons with disabilities. Caltrans Design Information Bulletin (DIB) 82 provides current design guidance on compliance with the various federal and state laws that relate to pedestrian accessibility. The "Highway Design Manual" also discusses ADA design requirements in detail.

The California Blueprint for Bicycling and Walking proposes strategies for increasing bicycling and walking while improving safety. It offers an action plan designed to achieve the desired goals, but flexible enough to change as new findings are evaluated. The goals were to increase bicycling and walking by 50 percent, plus reduce bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities by 50 percent within 10 years. Increased funding for walking/bicycling facilities and accommodating walking/bicycling in all transportation improvements and development projects has been an ongoing effort.

On September 26, 2013, Governor Jerry Brown signed legislation creating the Active Transportation Program *(ATP)* in the Department of Transportation (Senate Bill 99, Chapter 359 and Assembly Bill 101, Chapter 354). The ATP consolidates existing federal and state transportation programs, including the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA), and State Safe Routes to School (SR2S), into a single program with a focus to make California a national leader in active transportation. The ATP is administered by the Division of Local Assistance, Office of Active Transportation and Special Programs. The purpose of ATP is to increase walking and bicycling trips and improve safety. Active modes of transportation would promote physical activity and help reduce greenhouse gases.

*Pedestrian access maps* identify sidewalk locations and pedestrian access on state routes. These maps are available under *Complete Streets Maps* on pages 70–74. Pedestrian webpages are located in the *References* section on pages 79–80.

## Transit on Caltrans District 6 State Routes

The Division of Mass Transportation's (DMT) Statewide Transit Planning Branch works in coordination and partnership with local transit stakeholders, regional transportation planning organizations, transit agencies, and Caltrans district offices to integrate transit into mainstream transportation planning. The branch is responsible for reviewing and providing input into local and regional transportation planning documents, system planning documents, and local short- and long-range transit plans, to ensure transit has been considered as a vital mode choice in the evaluation of transportation projects.

DMT has developed the Statewide Transit Strategic Plan (STSP) in coordination and partnership with the California Transit (CTA) Association, the California Association for Coordinated Transportation (CalACT), and transit stakeholders across the state. The goal of the STSP is to set new direction to support public transportation in the future. This project highlights a sustainable transportation system that supports the outcomes of the California Interregional Blueprint.

Deputy Directive DD-98 states "The California Department of Transportation recognizes and supports the concept and implementation of *Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)* as a potential cost-effective strategy to maximize people throughput (emphasizing the movement of people, not just vehicles), reduce traveler delay, increase capacity, and foster energy savings on the California State Highway System (SHS), as on conventional highways. The Department will work closely with local jurisdictions, regional transportation planning agencies, transit operators, and other stakeholders to plan, develop, implement, and advocate for BRT systems."

*Transit service and trip maps in District 6* identify bus route and time schedules on state routes. The maps are available under *Complete Streets Maps* on pages 65–69.

## Non-Roadway Modes of Travel


Park and Ride lots network goals include, but are not limited to, increasing the mobility options of travelers, increasing person throughput on the system, decreasing the number of vehicle trips, decreasing the greenhouse gas and air pollution associated with transportation, and decreasing congestion on transportation facilities.

Park and ride lots are valuable resources that support transit usage and carpooling, which leads to improved performance of the entire transportation system. They provide a location for individuals to park their vehicles to join carpools and to access bus and rail services, thereby taking vehicles off local streets and roads and the state highway system (SHS). Please refer to detailed Park and Ride information in the *Complete Streets Maps* section on page 75.

The Division of Rail *(DOR)* manages and coordinates statewide intercity passenger rail service known as "Amtrak California" that helps to improve the state's air quality and reduce highway congestion and fuel consumption.

Amtrak California is composed of two rail routes: the San Joaquin, which operates between Oakland/Sacramento and Bakersfield, and the Pacific Surfliner, which operates between San Luis Obispo and San Diego. A dedicated thruway bus service offers connectivity between the two routes. In addition to these two routes, the Capitol Corridor, a state-funded but separately operated service, extends from Auburn to San Jose. These services offer travel to more than 130 destinations in California and parts of Nevada. California's state-supported system carries more than five million passengers annually.

The San Joaquin route stretches from Bakersfield to Stockton and beyond to Sacramento or the East Bay Area with connections to San Francisco. You can also connect to the Pacific Surfliner in Los Angeles via Amtrak Thruway bus connections in Bakersfield. Convenient bicycle racks are provided on board, and up to six bicycles are allowed per train. Folding bicycles are allowed as carry-on baggage on certain passenger cars. Please refer to detailed *San Joaquin schedule* and map information webpage located in the *References* section on page 80.

"The Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act for the 21st Century" approved by the voters as Proposition 1A on November 4, 2008, authorized the California Transportation Commission upon appropriation by the Legislature to allocate funds for capital improvements to intercity rail lines, commuter rail lines, and urban rail systems that provide direct connectivity to the high-speed train system and its facilities, or that are part of the construction of the high-speed train system as set forth in Streets and Highways Code, Division 3, Chapter 20, Section 2704.04, subdivision (b) or that provide capacity enhancements and safety improvements. Section 2704.095 requires the commission to program and allocate the net proceeds received from the sale of $950 million in bonds authorized under Proposition 1A for the High-Speed Passenger Train Bond (HSPTB) Program.

The 800-mile High-Speed Rail (HSR) system will connect Northern California (San Francisco and Sacramento) and Southern California (Los Angeles and San Diego) through the "backbone" the Central Valley (Fresno and Bakersfield). The train will be able to reach speeds up to 200 miles per hour. Regional and local transportation agencies are planning for multimodal connections to the future HSR stations. Please refer to the *References* section on page 80 for connectivity information.

The Office of Airports' goal in aviation is to foster and promote the development of a safe, efficient, dependable, and environmentally compatible air transportation system. For District 6, the Office of Airports in Sacramento manages 21 commercial airports that are in operation. It provides service that is beneficial and almost essential to goods movement in air cargo, passenger flights, and recreational flying. Emergency services, such as fire, police, and hospital, access some of these airports. Economic benefits to the California economy directly and indirectly from airport use are significant.

The Office of Airports in Caltrans performs a number of functions, which include:

- Conduct public use airport/heliport and hospital heliport safety and permit compliance inspections.
- Under Federal Aviation Administration contract, conduct inspections and update Airport Master Records (FAA Form 5010) for specified (non-Part 139) public-use airports.
- Review and assess new, amended, and corrected airport/heliport permit applications, including plans check/approval, site visits, final permit inspections, and issuing of permits.

- Evaluate proposed K-12 school (Education Code 17215), Community College (Education Code 81033), and state building (Public Utilities Code 21655) sites within two (*2) nautical miles* of an airport.
- Manage the Helicopter Landing Authorization (HLA) program (Public Utilities Code 21662.5) for evaluation and authorization of helicopter landings within 1,000 feet of K-12 schools.
- Host and maintain the "Hospital Heliport Dataplates" information system.
- Oversee development of and updates to the California Aeronautical Chart.
- Work with federal, state, and local agencies on facility, airspace, and other aviation matters.
- Assist and guide current and prospective airport/heliport owners, managers, and consultants with permitting, regulatory, and other aviation issues.
- Respond to state aeronautics-related requests and questions from the public.

Please refer to detailed airport information in the DSMP webpage located in the *References* section on page 80.